security measures wherever necessary. The State Governments concerned are notified of the findings of the seuciry audit suggesting additional measuers to tighten up the security of these dams.

Setting up of Regulatory Authority Bill

2255. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the consensus amongst the States on the proposed Bill about setting up of Regulatory Authority in each State with a nominee of the Centre;

(b) whether Government propose to rationalize the water price structure in the commercial, domestic and irrigation sectors; and

(c) how far this Bill result in stopping overutilization of groundwater reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a)To facilitate enactment of suitable ground water legislation by the States, Ministry of Water Resources has circulated to the States and Union Territories, a draft Model Bill to regulate and control the development and management of gound water. The Bill was initially circulated in 1970 which has been re-circulated in 1992, 1996 and 2005 for adoption. So far, eight States/UTs *viz*. Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry have enacted the legislation. The State of Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Punjab, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and UT of Chandigarh considers it is not necessary to enact legislation. In the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat the bill has been passed but not enacted. The remaining States/UTs have initiated the action for preparing the legislation.

(b) 'Water' being a State subject, decision on water pricing structure for commercial, domestic and irrigation sectors is to be taken by the concerned State Governments.

(c) The Model Bill circulated by the Union Government provides for

establishment of a Ground Water Authority by the States/UTs which will regulate the overutilization of groundwater resources in the concerned States/ UTs.

Searching of Saraswati river by ONGC

†2256. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of WATER RESORUCES be plesed to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC has taken the responsibility for searching the Saraswati river and its pure water resources, lost deep into the ground thousands of years ago in water crisis ridden western Rajasthan area;

(b) if so, the detailed information of the same with Government, so far;

(c) whether Government want to take the help of ONGC for searching the water resources of various rivers of the country which become extinct in the past; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. ONGC has undertaken a project titled "ONGC Project Sarawati" it is an initiative to contribute to the welfare of the people in drought prone areas of Western Rajasthan by providing safe drinking water. based on satellite imagery by ONGC, it was found that a few thousand years ago the river flowed from North-eastern side to South-western direction before disappearing into the desert. The Project is focused on identification of deeper aquifers, otherwise not tapped by agencies such as State groundwater departments and Central ground water bodies. It is planned to drill deep tubewells down to 1000 metres below ground level at several places in Jaisalmer, Barmer and Bikaner districts. The operational activities in the project have been entrusted by ONGC to WAPCOS.

(c) and (d) So far there is no proposal in MOWR/Central Ground Water Board to take the help of ONGC for searching the water resources of various rivers of the country which became extinct in the past.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.